

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 10203 01 OF 02 061549Z

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01

IO-13 NIC-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /090 W

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R 061535Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3805

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 10203

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB

SUBJECT: BRITISH TUC CONGRESS CONTINUES; SEPT. 4-5

REF: LONDON'S 10075

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: MODERATES BEAT BACK A SECOND ATTEMPT
IN TWO DAYS (REFTEL) BY LEFT-WINGERS TO CALL OFF TUC
ECONOMIC TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AS THE BRITISH TUC
CONGRESS CONTINUED ITS DELIBERATIONS. A RELATED MOVE
TO SECURE TUC APPROVAL FOR A BOYCOTT OF THE PAY BOARD
WAS ALSO BLUNTED. AMONG OTHER ACTIONS, TUC DELEGATES
ELECTED LEN MURRAY AS GENERAL SECRETARY, TOGETHER WITH
FIVE NEW MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL; APPROVED A
NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS ON PENSIONS, EDUCATION, AND
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PAGE 02 LONDON 10203 01 OF 02 061549Z

OTHER ISSUES; AND HEARD LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN BILL

SIMPSON'S APPEALS TO AVOID "BEING ENTIRELY DEFENSIVE"
ABOUT THE LABOR PARTY'S PUBLIC OWNERSHIP PROPOSALS.
END SUMMARY.

2. THE TUC CONGRESS SUBSTANTIALLY DEFEATED BY A VOTE
OF 6,806,000 TO 2,691,000 A RESOLUTION TABLED BY HUGH
SCANLON'S AMALGAMATED ENGINEERING WORKERS' UNION, WHICH
WOULD HAVE, INTER ALIA, FORCED THE GENERAL COUNCIL TO
WITHDRAW FROM ANY NEGOTIATIONS "AIMED AT IMPOSING WAGE
RESTRAINTS OF ANY KIND, AND WHICH SEEK TO RESTRICT
TRADE UNION RIGHTS OF FREE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING."
A PARALLEL RESOLUTION MOVED BY CLIVE JENKINS, ASSOCIA-
TION OF SCIENTIFIC AND MANAGERIAL STAFFS, CALLING FOR
A COMPLETE BOYCOTT OF THE PAY BOARD BY THE TUC WAS
ALSO DEFEATED, THOUGH MUCH MORE NARROWLY BY A VOTE OF
5,018,000 TO 4,513,000 (THE SCANLON INITIATIVE
REPRESENTED A SECOND ATTEMPT DURING THE CONGRESS TO
STOP TUC TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT).

3. AT THE SAME TIME, THE CONGRESS GAVE ITS FULL ENDORSE-
MENT TO A VERY TOUGH STANCE BY TUC NEGOTIATORS IN ANY
FUTURE ECONOMIC TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT. THE
DELEGATES APPROVED A RESOLUTION WHICH REITERATED THE
TUC'S DEMANDS FOR "STATUTORY CONTROLS OVER KEY PRICES,
SUCH AS FOOD, RENTS, RATES, FARES AND FUEL, AND A
SYSTEM OF SUBSIDIES TO MAKE THIS EFFECTIVE." THEY
ALSO CALLED FOR "THE RESTORATION OF FREE COLLECTIVE
BARGAINING." SIR SIDNEY GREENE OF THE NATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYMEN, WHO LED THE MODERATES' SUCCESSFUL FIGHT
TO CONTINUE THE TALKS, ASSERTED CONFIDENTLY THAT THE
GOVERNMENT "WAS NOW ON THE DEFENSIVE" ON THESE ISSUES,
AND THAT THE TUC HAD HELPED TO SWING PUBLIC OPINION
TO ITS VIEWS.

4. NEW LEADERS OF THE TUC - LIONEL (LEN) MURRAY, 51,
WHO HAS BEEN TUC ASSISTANT SECRETARY SINCE 1969, WAS
ELECTED UNOPPOSED AS GENERAL SECRETARY TO REPLACE
RETIRING VICTOR FEATHER. MURRAY, AN OXFORD GRADUATE,
HAS SERVED FOR MANY YEARS AS HEAD OF THE TUC ECONOMIC
DEPARTMENT. THE CONGRESS ALSO ELECTED FIVE NEW MEMBERS
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PAGE 03 LONDON 10203 01 OF 02 061549Z

TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL, REPLACING RETIREES. IN THE
SHIFTS RESULTING FROM THESE CHANGES IN THE COUNCIL
MAKEUP, THE LEFT APPEARS TO HAVE GAINED SOME GROUND.
MOREOVER, SOME MODERATES ON THE COUNCIL SUCH AS THE
POSTAL WORKERS' CHIEF TOM JACKSON, AND THE CLERICAL
WORKERS' LEADER ROY GRANTHAM (WHO ALSO IS NOTED FOR
HIS STAUNCH PRO-EUROPEAN COMMUNITY POSITION), WON RE-
ELECTION BY SHARPLY DECREASED MARGINS.

5. MILITANT POSITIONS TAKEN - THE CONGRESS TOOK A STRONG POSITION ON MANY IMPORTANT SOCIAL ISSUES. THE DELEGATES, INSPIRED IN PART BY THOUSANDS OF PARADING PENSIONERS ON THE BLACKPOOL WATERFRONT EARLY IN THE WEEK, GAVE ENTHUSIASTIC AND UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FOR A TUC CAMPAIGN TO SECURE HIGHER GOVERNMENT PENSIONS. THE PENSIONERS' DEBATE, WHICH WAS LED BY THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' LEADER JACK JONES, UNITED ALL TUC

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PAGE 01 LONDON 10203 02 OF 02 061548Z

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 10203

FACTIONS IN A CALL FOR TEN POUNDS, OR ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS A WEEK FOR SINGLE PENSIONERS, AND SIXTEEN

POUNDS, OR ABOUT FORTY DOLLARS A WEEK FOR COUPLES.
THEY PLEDGED "INDUSTRIAL ACTION" INCLUDING STRIKES TO
ACHIEVE THESE TARGETS.

6. OTHER RESOLUTIONS APPROVED BY THE CONGRESS CRITI-
CIZED THE INADEQUACY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S EDUCATION
POLICY; CALLED FOR MORE EFFECTIVE LEGISLATION AND
WHERE NECESSARY "INDUSTRIAL ACTION" AGAINST DISCRIMINA-
TION AGAINST WOMEN AT WORK; SOUGHT TWO ADDITIONAL
LEGAL HOLIDAYS (NEW YEAR'S DAY AND MAY DAY); AND
APPROVED REORGANIZATION OF THE TUC'S REGIONAL
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PAGE 02 LONDON 10203 02 OF 02 061548Z

STRUCTURE.

7. LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS - IN HIS SPEECH TO
THE CONGRESS THE LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN BILL SIMPSON
SAID THAT THE KEY TO A MORE PROSPEROUS BRITAIN WAS
EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY WHICH
HOLD THE KEY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH. WHILE CALLING FOR
DISCUSSION OF THE CONTROVERSIAL LABOR PARTY PROPOSAL
RELATING TO THE NATIONALIZATION OF 25 KEY INDUSTRIES
IN BRITAIN, HE SAID, "LET US NOT BE ENTIRELY DEFENSIVE
ABOUT OUR PROGRAM. PRIVATE ENTERPRISE MUST ALSO BE
MADE TO JUSTIFY ITS CASE FOR STAYING WHERE WE ARE."
SIMPSON ALSO WARNED THE PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY NOT
TO IGNORE DECISIONS WHICH WILL BE REACHED BY THE PARTY
CONFERENCE NEXT MONTH, LEST IT FACE A DISUNITED PARTY
AND THE EROSIONS OF GAINS MADE DURING THE LAST FEW
YEARS.

8. A KEY ISSUE WHICH WILL BE DEBATED IN ANOTHER
SESSION OF THE CONGRESS WILL BE ON THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY. A CLOSE FIGHT IS EXPECTED CONCERNING TRADE
UNION PARTICIPATION IN CERTAIN KEY INSTITUTIONS OF
THE COMMUNITY.

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